rates of enrolment at primary and upper primary levels were 1.73 per cent and 2.54 per cent respectively during the period 1950-51 and 1999-2000

(d) The Constitution (Ninety-Third Amendment) Bill, 2001 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 28-11 -2001. The Bill provides for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group 6-14 as a Fundamental Right.

The Government has also launched the Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in November, 2000 to pursue universal elementary education in a mission mode.

The goals of SSA are as follows:-

vii) All 6-14 age children in shcool/EGS centre/bridge course by 2003,

viii) All 6-14 age children complete five year primary education by 2007 and

ix) All 6-14 age children complete eight years of schooling by 2010.

x) Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life;

xi) Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010;

xii) Universal retention 2010.

This Ministry has also constituted National Level Mission under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister *vide* Resolution dated 2.**1**.200**1**.

Expert Committee to review education policy

224. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to formulate an expert committee to review the present education policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTEROF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) No, Sir. The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 as modified in 1992, evolved on a

national consensus, has laid down a comprehensive framework that guides the development of education in its entirety. It continues to be relevant and has stood the test of time. It does not require any revision/modification at present.

National plan for widows'

225. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN:
SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to have a national plan for widows who are part of the society but are being discriminated against and marginalised; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government have made any survey of the estimated widows abandoned by their families in Ashrams, and are subjected to a strict dress and diet codes and economic deprivation;

(c) whether a global meet on widows was held in February, 2002 in New Delhi to draw attention towards their exploitation; and

(d) if so, the subjects discussed, the decisions taken and the action being taken by Government on the recommendations/decisions?

THE MINISTEROF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women adopted by the Government calls for undertaking measures and programmes to provide for women belonging to specially disadvantaged sections such as disabled, widows, elderly women, deserted women etc. with special assistance. A Central Action Plan for implementation of the Policy guidelines is on the anvil. The Government has also launched a new scheme, called 'Swadhar' for women in distress which would take care of the needs of all categories of women in difficult circumstances, including destitute women and widows needing care and protection.

(b) Uttar Pradesh State Social Welfare Advisory Board had conducted a survey on the situation of widows and other women in Vrindavan and adjoining areas in 1998. The West Bengal Commission for Women had also conducted a survey of Bengali women in Vrindavan and submitted an interim report to the State Government of West Bengal in 2000. Apart from above, the National